

Proposed Recommendations for Consideration
Customer Service, Transparency, Accountability and Performance Committee
Monday November 8, 2010

Sunset Commission

Virginia has used sunset provisions for legislation numerous times, but has not utilized this approach in a methodical or deliberate manner. For over 30 years, other states have used the concept in varying degrees. The most successful implementation of the sunset approach has been in Texas through the Sunset Advisory Commission. During its tenure, the Commission has sunsetted 52 agencies and achieved savings estimated to be over \$700 million. While Virginia has outstanding organizations such as the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission and the Auditor of Public Accounts, there is no entity within state government that takes a routine evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of state agencies. While the Governor's Commission on Government Reform and Restructuring has attempted to fill part of this void, a permanent Commission dedicated to continual review and evaluation paired with the automatic sunseting of agencies, programs and boards would increase overall transparency and accountability of results within state government.

Recommendation: Create a Virginia Sunset Advisory Commission to review and evaluate all state government created agencies and programs on a cyclical basis. Implement sunset legislation on all agencies and programs that requires proactive legislation to be passed to continue their existence on a cyclical basis.

Regional Teleconferencing Capabilities

Virginia is a vast Commonwealth spread across 42,000 square miles. While Richmond as the capitol city is the seat of state government, technology exists to better bring Virginians together. In order to reduce costs associated with assembling together, the Commonwealth can use available technology to bring Virginians together without making them be in the same room.

Recommendation: The Commonwealth should maintain an inventory of all state-owned or maintained facilities that have the capacity of video-conferencing. There should at least one location in each region of the Commonwealth designated as the main outlet for video-conferencing that would be utilized for meetings and training for state government in order to limit unnecessary travel.

State Employee Suggestion Program

Virginia has maintained a state employee suggestion program for years. It also has the Productivity Investment Fund to partner with Virginia agencies to identify, catalyze and implement innovative solutions which enable a more efficient and cost effective government for the benefit of the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Recommendation: The Productivity Investment Fund should be enhanced to fully develop and implement creative proposals to improve government services.

Recommendation: The Commonwealth should adopt best practices from the private sector to improve its employee suggestion program that rewards employees for new ideas to improve government service delivery and cost.

Vendor Monitoring and Compliance

Virginia currently has statutes and agency regulations relating to the disbarment of contractors for unsatisfactory performance (§ 2.2-4321). While some reform initiatives have advocated certain timelines for disbarment, those hard determinates can be arbitrary when taking into account unintended consequences. However, additional guidance on the punishment for nonperformance could be necessary for uniform applicability. Also, there is currently ambiguity on the role and authority of the monitoring of state contracts and the performance of those contractors.

Recommendation: Agencies should be given greater guidance on the appropriate punishment for vendors whose contracts are canceled for nonperformance.

Recommendation: Strengthen vendor performance monitoring of vendors who do business with the state and provide clear authority on who monitors each contract and is responsible for assuring compliance and performance.